

State Representative
Joyce McDonald

- **District Office:**
101 S. Meridian, Suite I
Puyallup, WA 98371
(253) 840-4606
- **Olympia Office: (Staffed during legislative sessions)**
439 John L. O'Brien Bldg.
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7948
- **Toll-free hotline:** 1-800-562-6000
- **E-mail:** mcdonald_jo@leg.wa.gov
- **Website:** <http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/mcdonald.htm>
- **Committees:**
Appropriations
Rules
Trade and Economic Development
- Assistant Ranking Republican

2004 Legislative Report • 25th District


Dear friends,

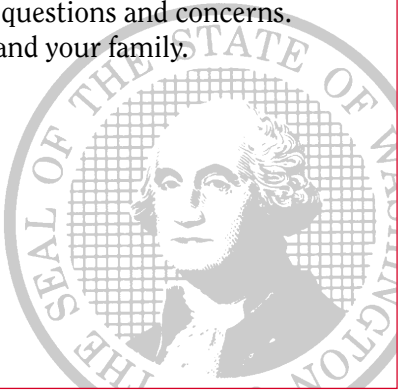
With this report, I'd like to tell you about the progress we made during the 2004 legislative session which adjourned March 11. Thank you so much for all your e-mails, letters, calls and visits during session. It is an honor to serve and represent you.

As a result of this year's work in Olympia, we can look forward to more job opportunities, no new taxes, tax relief for senior citizens, improvements to relieve our traffic congestion, safer schools for children, and tougher laws against child molesters.

My goal is to serve you by solving problems and creating solutions that will improve our daily lives now and in the future. I appreciate your input as we address those challenges that face our state. I'm always interested in your opinions, suggestions, questions and concerns. Please feel free to call my office about any issues important to you and your family.

Sincerely,


Rep. Joyce McDonald



State Representative
Joyce McDonald
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington State
Department of Printing

2004 Legislative Report • 25th District

**Page program offers legislative experience,
education for young people**



Many thanks to Judah Heimlich and Diana Hafterson, both of Puyallup, and Misty Caudle of Tacoma, who each served as legislative pages in my Olympia office during the 2004 session.

Pages' duties vary from ceremonial tasks such as presenting flags to operational chores like delivering messages and documents to legislators in their offices, committee meetings and the House chamber during floor sessions. Pages also spend two hours each day in a classroom setting learning about the legislative process.

If you are a student who is at least 14 years of age and have not reached your 17th birthday and hold a grade-point average of C+ or better, you might be eligible to become a page in the 2005 legislative session. For more information and an application, go online to: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/house/hadm/pageprog.htm> or contact my office at 253-840-4606.

Judah Heimlich



Diana Hafterson



Misty Caudle



Rep. Joyce McDonald • 2004 Legislative Report • 25th District

Highlights of the 2004 session:

Supplemental operating budget I voted YES ☒

We passed a supplemental operating budget without increasing taxes. The budget includes a 50-cent-per hour pay increase for home health care workers who help our state's most vulnerable citizens.

I want to ensure that government lives within its means and that we continue prioritizing needs to protect taxpayers while providing vital services. Although I voted for the budget, I am concerned that the more we spend now, the more it will have to be made up later. We should get back to the Priorities of Government plan the governor proposed last year.

Senior citizen property tax relief I voted YES ☒

I prime-sponsored a bill to give senior citizens and retired disabled people additional relief from the burden of high property taxes. A Senate measure nearly identical to my bill passed the Legislature and will let about 18,000 more people qualify for property tax relief.

The bill increases income eligibility for those seniors and disabled people who choose to defer part of their property taxes until the sale of their property. It also exempts the homeowner from all excess levies if their income is between \$30,001 and \$35,000. Those with lower incomes can exempt portions of regular property tax levies. Please contact the Pierce County Assessor Treasurer's office to find out if you are eligible.

Preserving primary election choices I voted YES ☒ PARTIALLY VETOED

We all would have preferred to stay with Washington's blanket primary, but since the courts threw that out, I wanted something as close to it as possible that would **preserve your choices** in the election. The closest system we agreed to was a "Top 2" primary, in which the two people who get the most votes in September face off in November.

Also realizing that Top 2 might be challenged in the courts, the Legislature added a Montana-style fallback. This would have voters privately pick a single party's ballot in September and choose only among that party's candidates.

I was very disappointed that when the measure reached the governor's desk, he vetoed the Top 2 section, leaving the Montana-style party ballot as Washington's new primary system.

Stopping coaches who prey I voted YES ☒

Although there are many great teachers and coaches in our state, there are also some who bring shame to the profession by sexually abusing our children. When they are caught, they often move to another school district where the cycle of abuse begins again.

This year, I introduced legislation requiring school districts to share information about child sex abuse by former and current employees. The measure passed the House unanimously. An identical Senate bill was the legislation that made it through the entire Legislature and became law.

Police applicant lie detector testing I voted YES ☒

The House unanimously approved a bill I introduced that would have required police officer job applicants to undergo a psychological examination and a lie detector test before they are hired. The bill was prompted by the case of a part-time Wilkeson police officer who raped two teenage girls.

When citizens see a uniform, a badge and a gun, they have every right to expect that the officer is worthy of their trust. This bill would have helped to preserve the integrity of the law enforcement profession. Unfortunately, it died in the Senate. I plan to work toward passage of this bill next year.

Cross-Base Highway I voted YES ☒

Legislation we passed designates the proposed Cross-Base Highway as a "highway of statewide significance." The designation moves **State Route 704** up on the priority list for construction and makes the project eligible for money raised through a regional funding package. The Cross-Base Highway would link Frederickson to Interstate 5, relieving local traffic congestion and helping job growth. I am also pleased to report that the project to improve South Hill traffic flow on **SR 161 (Meridian)** will soon be underway.



Rep. Joyce McDonald welcomed Daffodil Festival princesses when they visited the state Capitol during the 2004 legislative session.

Extending tax relief for jobs I voted YES ☒

As a member of the House Trade and Economic Development Committee, one of my primary goals has been to preserve existing jobs and create new ones in our state. I supported and the Legislature passed a renewal of two tax breaks to keep jobs thriving in the high-tech research and development and biotech industries.

Protecting our food supply I voted YES ☒

In response to the mad cow disease scare, I supported a measure that will help to protect our food supply. House Bill 2802 outlaws trade in live "downer" cows – those too weak or diseased to walk – to ensure they do not enter the beef supply. I also co-sponsored House Bill 2929 which gives meatpackers a temporary tax break until foreign countries lift their embargoes against American beef. Both bills passed the Legislature.

K-12 finance task force I voted YES ☒

It has been more than 25 years since our school finance system was created. The House approved a bill that would have created a joint task force to study the K-12 financing structure and develop alternative funding models. Although the measure failed to advance in the Senate, the issue is important enough that the House has created a similar task force to study the K-12 funding system during this interim between legislative sessions and look for ways to improve it. I have been appointed as one of the House Appropriations Committee members to serve on this work group.

Strengthening child-rape laws I voted YES ☒

I supported House Bill 2400, the Child Protection Act of 2004, which makes it harder for sex offenders who victimize children to get treatment in lieu of prison time.

The original bill would have imposed tough mandatory sentences against child molesters and provided for treatment behind bars. When that was watered down, I introduced an amendment in the House Appropriations Committee to make the measure stronger. Although my amendment was turned down, I worked with other lawmakers to ensure that the final bill would provide justice for victims and keep sex offenders from having a second chance to harm children.

Increasing health care options I voted YES ☒

We took action to help small businesses with 50 or fewer employees offer their workers a lower-cost package of health care options and benefits.

Police domestic violence policies I voted YES ☒

I supported several bills signed into law that deal with domestic violence and how police departments handle such problems when their officers or leaders are involved.